

MARBLE OR GRANITE FOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

FEBRUARY 25, 1839.

Submitted by Mr. LINCOLN, chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings, and ordered to be printed.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

February 11, 1839.

On motion of Mr. PRATT,

*Resolved*, That the Committee on Public Buildings be instructed to inquire into the expediency of having the public buildings, hereafter to be erected, built of either marble or granite, instead of the sandstone that has been used; and that the said committee report to this House which of these materials is the most durable and economical, and the several prices at which each of said materials can be furnished.

Attest:

H. A. GARLAND, *Clerk*.

No. 1.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

February 14, 1839.

SIR: In behalf of the Committee on Public Buildings, I beg to inquire of you the price of cutting plain ashlar-granite; also, the price at which such stone, prepared for use, (that is, granite cut into plain ashlars,) can be procured, by the foot, delivered in the city of Washington, in sufficient quantities for the construction of the new Post Office building, upon the plan prepared by the architect; and, also, the prices, respectively, at which marble and freestone, prepared and cut fit for use in such a building, can be obtained, including the rough material and labor in each statement of price.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

LEVI LINCOLN.

Major WILLIAM NOLAND,

*Commissioner of the Public Buildings.*

No. 2.

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS,

February 15, 1839.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, a letter from Mr. Robert Brown, the superintendent of the new Treasury building and Patent office, in answer to the inquiry contained in your letter of the 14th instant, respecting the price of granite, marble, and freestone, which was referred to him.

I have the honor to be, with high respect, your obedient servant,

W. NOLAND,

*Commissioner of Public Buildings.*

Hon. LEVI LINCOLN,

*Chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings.*

No. 3.

FEBRUARY 14, 1839.

SIR: In answer to your inquiries respecting the price of granite, marble, and freestone, I have the honor to state that granite, in the rough, delivered at the railroad depot, can be furnished at forty cents per cubic foot; and fine, cut for ashlar, for fifty cents per superficial foot: that is, ninety cents for stone and work fine cut. The cost of split granite, with beds and joints cut, is seventy-five cents per superficial foot for stone and work in ashlar, including fine work for doors and windows. The lowest price at which marble could be procured, by contract, delivered in Washington, was one dollar and seventy-five cents per cubic foot, in the rough; and the price of cutting marble for plain ashlar, is forty cents per superficial foot.

The cost of freestone, delivered at the wharf in Washington, is: all blocks under two and a half tons, forty-three and a third cents per cubic foot; over two and a half and under three and a half tons, fifty cents per cubic foot; all over three and a half tons, fifty-six and two-thirds cents per cubic foot: averaging, throughout the building, about forty-six and a half cents per cubic foot. The price of cutting freestone, for ashlar, plain face, is thirty cents per superficial foot.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ROBERT BROWN,

*Superintendent Public Buildings.*

Hon. LEVI LINCOLN,

*Chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings.*

No. 4.

CITY OF WASHINGTON, February 25, 1839.

DEAR SIR: It appears that a proposition has been made by Mr. Gilmore, of Baltimore, to furnish any quantity of marble, of the best kind, delivered in this city, for a sum not exceeding 90 cents per cubic foot: this being the case, it would make a material change in the cost of a build-

ing faced with marble, compared with the estimates founded upon a cost of \$1 50 a cubic foot. If the plan of facing the building with marble, which I suggested in my letter of the 15th instant, were carried into execution, the cost of a marble structure would be as cheap as one of granite, and, I may say, of freestone also. Many of the marble structures of antiquity have been constructed with slabs, having suitable bondings; and it is a practice also pursued in Philadelphia.

With the marble of which Mr. Gilmore speaks I am acquainted; it is in the same region that we obtained the marble of which the Washington monument in Baltimore is constructed—a solid, durable, and beautiful material. I have no hesitation in saying that, if this quality of marble can be obtained at the price stated, (and I believe it could be furnished at a less price,) it is the best and most suitable article for facing the walls, &c. of the public buildings.

The marble quarries of which Mr. G. speaks, I understand, are inexhaustible, covering within his precincts 40 acres, and of great thickness.

If it should be found expedient to change the material from freestone to marble in the future buildings, the north and south wings, at each end of the Treasury edifice, being made in advance of the present building, could be faced with marble in place of freestone; and this latter being painted, it could be made to imitate the marble.

Respectfully submitted:

ROBERT MILLS,

*Architect of the Public Buildings.*

HON. LEVI LINCOLN,

*Chairman of the Committee on Public Buildings.*

ing faced with marble compared with the estimates founded upon a cost of \$1.50 a cubic foot. If the plan of facing the building with marble which I suggested in my letter of the 15th instant, were carried into execution, the cost of a marble structure would be as cheap as one of granite, and I may say of freestone also. Many of the marble structures of antiquity have been constructed with slabs, having simple moldings; and it is a mistake also to suppose that the marble of which Mr. Gibson speaks is so bad. In the same region that we obtained the marble of which the Washington Monument in Baltimore is constructed—a solid, durable, and beautiful material—I have no hesitation in saying that if this quality of marble can be obtained at the price stated, and I believe it could be furnished at a less price, it is the best and most suitable article for facing the walls of the public buildings.

The marble quarries of which Mr. G. speaks, I understand, are first, granite, covering within his precincts 10 acres, and of great thickness. If it should be found expedient to change the material from freestone to marble in the future building, the north and south wings, at each end of the Treasury edifice, being made in advance of the present building, could be faced with marble in place of freestone; and this latter being granite, it could be made to imitate the marble.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT MILLS,

Secretary of the Committee on Public Buildings.

Hon. Levi Lincoln, Secy. of the Treasury, Washington, D.C.

My dear Sir:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst., in relation to the proposed plan of facing the Treasury building with marble. I have no objection to the plan, and I have no objection to the price stated.

ROBERT MILLS,

Secretary of the Committee on Public Buildings.

Hon. Levi Lincoln, Secy. of the Treasury, Washington, D.C.

Mr. G. H. Brown has been appointed by the Board of Commissioners to examine the plan of facing the Treasury building with marble, and to report thereon to the Board. He will be in the city for some time, and will be in communication with the Secretary of the Committee on Public Buildings.